

Yesterday, the New Mexico Congressional delegation introduced legislation to name the U.S. Department of Interior building after the late Stewart Udall.

Stewart Udall was the Interior Secretary under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. He passed away last month.

From Senator Bingaman's press release:

"Stewart Udall was instrumental in the passage of virtually all of our nation's landmark environmental laws," said Bingaman, who chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "In the 161-year history of the Department of the Interior, there have been many exceptional individuals who have served as Secretary of the Interior. Stewart Udall certainly ranks among the best of them. In recognition of his lifetime of work pursuing the common good and protecting our nation's public lands and waters, and in particular his achievements as Secretary of the Interior, I am proud to have introduced this legislation in the Senate."

"Stewart Udall's public service and leadership were a true inspiration to me personally and I was honored to know him," said Heinrich. "There is no question that Secretary Udall's immeasurable impact on our nation will continue to be felt by Americans through the magnificent National Parks and public lands that he dedicated his life to preserving. Our nation is deeply indebted to him and today, on Earth Day, it is appropriate that we name the federal building, which contributes so significantly to his lifetime mission, the Stewart Lee Udall Department of the Interior Building."

"Throughout the country, from our pristine wilderness to clean rivers, we can see Secretary Udall's influence," said Luján. "It would be fitting for the United States Department of Interior building to carry his name and legacy as well."

"Secretary Stewart Udall's contributions to the people of our state will live on as we continue his work to protect our public lands and enjoy the benefits of our wilderness areas and National Parks," said Teague. "It is only appropriate that his memory be immortalized on a Department of Interior building, the agency that is charged with the care of some of his greatest accomplishments."

Cosponsors in the Senate are Mark Udall (D-CO), John McCain (R-AZ) and Harry Reid (D-NV). Cosponsors in the House are Gabrielle Giffords (AZ-8), Raúl Grijalva (AZ-7), Ann Kirkpatrick (AZ-1), Harry Mitchell (AZ-5), and Ed Pastor (AZ-4).